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REVIEWS

The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets. By JANE ADDAMS.
New York: Macmillan, 1909. \$1.25.

One lays down *The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets* with the feeling that sociology has published a classic. So exquisitely and poetically has Miss Addams revealed the precious stuff of which young hearts are made, persisting fresh and elemental through all the carelessness and disregard of modern city life, that we gladly give her book a place beside Wordsworth's great Ode and those poems of Robert Louis Stevenson, upon which, as we approach middle life, we come to depend more and more for our reminders of the fugitive and invisible things of youth.

The chapters of this book are like a series of strong *genre* pictures, in which one sees the crude and habitual become all at once suggestive of strange potentialities and ideals; pictures in which life and fact are shown with such rare understanding and simple truthfulness as to compel instant recognition; but pictures in which the true artist has used realism to arouse rather than to overwhelm us.

In selecting and organizing this material out of her singularly comprehensive experience Miss Addams has rendered a notable service to society, which is just now coming into full consciousness of its long-neglected obligation to childhood. She does not reproach us for losing sight of the radical changes that have come about in the home and social life of working people through the organization and centralization of modern industries, nor with our failure to comprehend immediately the profound effect upon young life and energies caused by the abstraction from the home of those activities in which children were producers along with their parents. She even comforts us a little by admitting our right to some confusion, and our inability to have kept up in our social reconstructions with the mad pace set by industrial and commercial progress. But she points out very clearly "the stupid and dangerous experiment we have entered upon in organizing work and failing to organize play," in concluding that the municipality

"has no responsibility in regard to the life of the streets," and in turning over to commercialism practically all the provisions for public recreation "at the very moment when this industrialism has gathered together multitudes of eager young creatures from all quarters of the earth as a labor supply for the countless workshops and factories upon which the present industrial city is based."

Miss Addams holds her real brief against society in the fact that "the mass of these young people, possessed of good intentions and equipped with a certain understanding of city life which could be made a most valuable social instrument," are left to seek out, in the bewilderment of the streets, their own means of self-expression, "where the whole apparatus for supplying pleasure is wretchedly inadequate and full of danger to whomsoever may approach it." "It is as if we ignored a wistful, over-confident creature who walked through our streets calling out, 'I am the Spirit of Youth! With me, all things are possible!' We fail to understand what he wants or even to see his doings, although his acts are pregnant with meaning, and we may either translate them into a sordid chronicle of petty vice, or turn them into a solemn school for civic righteousness."

In view of the wide circulation of this volume and that of the periodicals in which most of the chapters have appeared as single articles, we feel particularly grateful to Miss Addams for her frank treatment of the sex impulse and her recognition of the importance of directing and utilizing this fundamental instinct through the development of the imagination and the diffusion of emotion. She lays upon the adults of each generation "the immemorial obligation of nurturing and restraining the youth," and of conserving "that tremendous force which makes possible the family, that bond which holds society together and blends the experience of generations into a continuous story."

From the crowded tenement quarter about her she brings us some touching stories of the strength and beauty of family affection, of "that wonderful love for the child, which seems at times, in the midst of our stupid social and industrial arrangements, all that keeps society human, that touch of nature which unites it now, as it was that same devotion which first lifted it out of the swamp of bestiality."

In the chapter on "The Spirit of Youth and Industry," the lack of connection between education and life is made responsible

not only for the child's unfitness for intelligent and conscious participation in industrial life, but also for the fact that "industry itself has fallen back into old habits and repeated traditional mistakes." Educators are urged "to bring industry into 'the kingdom of the mind' and to pervade it with the human spirit."

The stories of girls and boys who have drifted into delinquency and repudiated their most sacred obligations in sheer revolt against work which made of them mere machines—"work detached from direct emotional incentive, and separated from family life and the public opinion of the community"—throw a strong light upon the hideous system under which we have grown so careless of both the "type" and "the single life." And we involuntarily contrast those fine old expressions of proletarian exuberance furnished by the marches of the guilds and craftsmen with "that long procession of factory workers in which the young walk almost as wearily and listlessly as the old." Yet over against all this, to save us from utter gloom and discouragement, stand the vivid pictures of those high-spirited young people in whom the fire was not quenched—who "scorned delights and lived laborious days" in obedience to the urgings of art and beauty.

On every page of this book we find some suggestion of the writer's thesis that human nature has not changed throughout the ages, and that in these time-old stirrings and impulses of young hearts are to be found "the perpetual springs of life's self-renewal."

In her plea for our recognition of the impulse for joy, and for the provision of activities through which the emotions of our young people may be converted into permanent social values, we seem to hear again those high prophecies of an earlier day, when a great American educator previsioned a democracy whose confession of faith should be, "You can trust men if you will train them."

When the ardors and enthusiasms of youthful hearts have been "trained" into desire for justice in human affairs; when a clue has been given to these young zealots by which they may connect their lofty aims with daily living; when religious instruction is given validity because it is attached to conduct, then it may be easy to bring about certain social reforms so sorely needed in our industrial cities. This is Miss Addams' summing up of her faith in society's integrity, and her statement of the function of youth in the regenerating processes of life.

It is as if "the Lady Abbess of Chicago" with gently entreating eyes, held out to us the key to those cloistered recesses in youthful hearts where nature stores the elements of human destiny.

HARRIET PARK THOMAS

Certain pages of Miss Addams' book seem to me to contain quite immortal statements of the fact that the essential and perennial function of the youth-period is to reaffirm authentically the value and the charm of life. All the details of the little book flow from this central insight or persuasion. Of *how* they flow I can give no account, for the *wholeness* of Miss Addams' embrace of life is her own secret. She simply *inhabits reality*, and everything she says necessarily expresses its nature. She *can't help writing truth*.

WM. JAMES

War on the White Slave Trade. A Book Designed to Awaken the Sleeping and to Protect the Innocent. Edited by ERNEST A. BELL, Secretary of the Illinois Vigilance Association (for the Suppression of the White Slave Traffic). Containing chapters by Hon. Edwin W. Sims, United States District Attorney, Chicago; Hon. Harry A. Parkin, Assistant United States District Attorney, Chicago; Hon. Clifford A. Roe, Assistant State's Attorney, Cook County, Chicago; Wm. Alexander Coote, Secretary of the National Vigilance Association, London, Eng.; James Bronson Reynolds, of the National Vigilance Committee, New York; Charles N. Crittenton, President of the National Florence Crittenton Mission; Mrs. Ophelia Amigh, Superintendent of the Illinois Training School for Girls; Miss Lucy A. Hall, Deaconess of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Chicago; Principal D. F. Sutherland, Red Water Institute, Red Water, Texas; Dr. William T. Belfield, Professor in Rush Medical College, Chicago; Dr. Winfield Scott Hall, Professor in Northwestern University Medical School, Chicago; Rev. Melbourne P. Boynton, Pastor of the Lexington Avenue Baptist Church, Chicago. Chicago: The Charles C. Thompson Co., 1909. Pp. 481.